

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of preventing the infection of a computer network by a computer virus, where that virus can be spread by e-mail traffic, the method comprising:

installing at an e-mail gateway of the network an anti-virus application, which application scans at least incoming e-mail traffic for known viruses;

in the event that a new virus is detected by the provider of the anti-virus application, sending a notification of this event from the provider to the anti-virus application; [[and]]

at the anti-virus application, responding to said notification by discontinuing normal handling of e-mails, wherein discontinuing normal handling of e-mails includes failing to deliver incoming e-mails or their attachments to their recipients within the network and causing these e-mails or attachments to be re-directed to a buffer for safe storage;

subsequently generating a signature for the virus at the anti-virus application provider and providing that signature to the application at the gateway

at the gateway, after receiving the signature, using the application to scan the previously buffered e-mails or attachments for the virus;

after scanning the previously buffered e-mails, delivering e-mails or attachments which are virus free to their recipients, and

causing the normal handling of e-mails at the e-mail gateway to be resumed.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1 and comprising establishing a communication channel between the anti-virus application provider and the anti-virus application using a TCP/IP or UDP/IP protocol, and sending said notification over said channel.

3. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said notification is sent from the application provider to the application as an e-mail.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein said notification is sent from the application provider to the application as a result of a result of a request or enquiry sent from the application to the provider.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A system, the system comprising:
a processor housed on a network server;
an e-mail gateway installed on the network server;
a repository accessible by the processor; and

[[An]] an anti-virus application installed for installation on [[a]] the network server
~~on which is also installed an e-mail gateway~~, the application being arranged to interact with the e-mail gateway to scan incoming e-mails and/or e-mail attachments for known viruses, the application having means for receiving a notification from the provider of the application which notification causes the application to prevent delivery of e-mails or e-

mail attachments received at the gateway and to divert these e-mails or attachments to a buffer for safe storage, and means for subsequently receiving a second notification from the provider which notification causes the application to cease preventing delivery of newly received e-mails or attachments.

7. (Original) A computer software storage medium having stored thereon an anti-virus application for causing a computer operating as an e-mail gateway to scan incoming e-mails and/or e-mail attachments for known viruses,

the application being arranged to receive a notification from the provider of the application which notification causes the application to prevent delivery of e-mails or e-mail attachments received at the gateway and to divert these e-mails or attachments to a buffer for safe storage, and to subsequently receive a second notification from the provider which notification causes the application to cease preventing delivery of newly received e-mails or attachments.

8. (Original) A method of preventing the infection of a computer network by a computer virus, where that virus can be spread by e-mail traffic, the method comprising:

installing at an e-mail gateway of the network an anti-virus application, which application scans at least incoming e-mail traffic for known viruses using a database of virus signatures;

in the event that a new virus is detected by the provider of the anti-virus application, calculating a checksum for the file carrying the virus or a relevant part of

that file, and sending a notification containing the checksum from the provider to the anti-virus-application; and

at the anti-virus application, using the checksum to screen e-mails and/or their attachments for the virus until such time as a signature for the virus is received by the e-mail gateway from the application provider.